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UNITY OF HISTORY.

THE REDE LECTURE
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BY

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THE UNITY OF HISTORY.

THE revival of learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries marks, as is agreed on all hands, one of the great epochs in the history of the mind of man. It is easy to exaggerate the extent of the revival itself; it is easy to dwell too exclusively on the bright side of its results; but the undoubted fact still remains by none the less. That age was an age when the spirit of man cast away trammels by which it had long been fettered; it was an age when men opened their eyes to light against which they had been closed for ages. A new world was opened; or more truly, a world which men never had forgotten, but which had become to them a

world of fable, was suddenly set before them in its true and living reality. The Virgil, the Aristotle, the Alexander, of legend gave way to the true Virgil, the true Aristotle, the true Alexander, called up again to life in their writings, and in their deeds. We are indeed apt greatly to exaggerate the ignorance of earlier times, but in one point it is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of the change. It must have been like the discovery of a new sense, like the discovery of a new world of being, when the treasures of genuine Greek literature were, for the first time, thrown open to the gaze of Western Christendom. The twelfth century had its classical revival as well as the fifteenth; but the classical revival of the twelfth century hardly ever went beyond a more accurate knowledge, a more happy imitation, of the elder specimens of that Latin tongue which was still the tongue of religion, government, and learning. To William of Malmesbury and John of Salisbury

the voice of Homer was dumb, and the voice of Aristotle spoke only at third-hand with a Spanish Saracen to his dragoman. Such knowledge of Greek as fell to the lot of Robert Grosseteste and Roger Bacon was looked on as a prodigy; and, whatever was its amount, it certainly did not extend to any familiar knowledge of the masterpieces of Hellenic poetry, history, or oratory. That revival of learning which brought the men of our Northern world face to face with the camp before Ilios and with the Agorê of Athens, was indeed a revolution which amounted to hardly less than a second birth of the human mind.

Yet the revival of learning, rich and manifold as have been its fruits, had its dark side. I speak not of its immediate results, political and ecclesiastical, in its native land of Italy. Yet better far was the honest barbarism of the darkest age than the guilty splendours of Lorenzo and of Leo, where all the blaze of art and poetry and learning strive in vain to

gloss over the overthrow of freedom and the foul abuse of sacred things. I speak of the effects of the classical revival of those days directly on the pursuit of learning, on those studies of Greek and Roman literature and art which became the all in all of the intellect of the age. It at once opened and narrowed the field of human study. It led men to centre their whole powers on an exclusive attention to writings contained in two languages, and for the most part in certain arbitrarily chosen periods of those two languages. In its first stage it devoted itself too exclusively to the mere literature of those two languages, as opposed to the solid lessons of their political history. But, in all its forms and stages, it fostered the idea that the languages, the arts, the history, of Greece and Rome, at certain stages of their being, were the only forms of language, art, and history which deserved the study of cultivated men. It led to the belief, not perhaps fully put forth in words, but none

the less practically acted on, that those two languages, and all that belonged to them, had some special privilege above all others—that the studies which were honoured by the possibly ambiguous name of 'classical' were fenced off from all others by some mysterious barrier —that they formed a sacred precinct which the initiated alone might enter, and from which the profane were to be jealously shut out. Such a state of feeling, a feeling which has even now far from died out, could not fail to lead to mere contempt, and thereby to mere ignorance, of everything beyond the sacred pale. And, what is more, it hindered any knowledge of the true nature of those things which were allowed a place within the sacred pale. It led to a cutting off of so-called 'classical' studies from all ordinary human pursuits and human interests. And of this cutting off we still feel the evil effects. Men persuaded themselves that 'classical' models in literature and art were, not only among the noblest and

most precious works of human genius, but that they were the only possible standards of excellence. Whatever did not conform to their patterns was worthless, barbarous, what the exclusive votaries of classical art and literature deemed that they were branding with the heaviest reproach when they called it Gothic. They thus cut themselves off from long and stirring volumes of the world's history; they cut themselves off from forms of art and language as worthy of their homage as those which they deemed alone worthy to receive it. They learned to look with scorn on the works of men of their own land, their own blood, and their own faith. They stifled art and literature by arbitrary rules drawn from models, perfect indeed in their own time and place, but which were utterly inappropriate when creeds and tongues and feelings had altogether changed. Let any one who would thoroughly take in how low the taste of Englishmen had fallen under the dominion of the exclusive

classical fashion turn to those passages in the Spectator where Addison chances to speak of the history, the manners, the art, the religious belief, of Englishmen in earlier days. Then let him turn, and see how even then nature asserted her rights against the deadening yoke of fashion, in the papers in which the same man called on his astonished age to acknowledge an outpouring of the true Homeric spirit in the English lay of Chevy Chace.

But, more than all this, the exclusive study of 'classical' models hindered men from gaining any living knowledge of the classical models themselves. It has been wittily said that they deemed that all 'the ancients' lived at the same time. Certain it is that the habit of constantly classing together Greece and Rome—that is, Greece and Rome during a few arbitrarily chosen centuries of their history—in opposition to all other times and places led to an utter forgetfulness of the wide gap by which Greece and Rome were parted asunder. Men forgot

the difference between the Ionian singer and the Augustan laureate; they held up Homer and Virgil as poets of the same class, whose merits and defects could be profitably compared together. They would have been amazed indeed to be told that the true parallel for the tale of the wrath of Achilleus was to be looked for in the Lay of the Nibelungs or in the stirring battle-songs of Saulcourt and Maldon. They would have deemed it a degradation to entertain the thought that the vulgar tongues of England and Germany were kindred tongues, of equal birth and claiming equal honour, with the sacred languages of Latium and Attica. They would have deemed it, not so much a degradation as an utterance of open madness, had they heard that those sacred languages were but dialects of one common mother-speech, and that its elder offspring was to be looked for in the tongues of lands which the Macedonian conqueror had barely grazed, and, more wondrous still to tell, in the fast-vanishing speech of a few men of

strange tongue by the Eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.

On us a new light has come. I do not for a moment hesitate to say that the discovery of the Comparative method in philology, in mythology—let me add in politics and history and the whole range of human thought—marks a stage in the progress of the human mind at least as great and memorable as the revival of Greek and Latin learning. The great contribution of the nineteenth century to the advance of human knowledge may boldly take its stand alongside of the great contribution of the fifteenth. Like the revival of learning, it has opened to its votaries a new world, and that not an isolated world, a world shut up within itself, but a world in which times and tongues and nations which before seemed parted poles asunder, find each one its own place, its own relation to every other, as members of one common primæval brotherhood. And not the least of its services is that it has put the languages and

the history of the so-called 'classical' world into their true position in the general history of the world. By making them no longer the objects of an exclusive idolatry, it has made them the objects of a worthier, because a more reasonable, worship. It has broken down the middle wall of partition between kindred races and kindred studies; it has swept away barriers which fenced off certain times and languages as 'dead' and 'ancient;' it has taught us that there is no such thing as 'dead' and 'living' languages, as 'ancient' and 'modern' history; it has taught us that the study of language is one study, that the study of history is one study; it has taught us that no languages are more truly living than those which an arbitrary barrier fences off as dead; it has taught us that no parts of history are more truly modern—if by modern we mean full of living interest and teaching for our own times—than those which the delusive name of 'ancient' would seem to brand as something which has wholly passed away, something which,

for any practical loss in these later times, may safely be forgotten.

My position then is that, in all our studies of history and language—and the study of language, besides all that it is in other ways, is one most important branch of the study of history—we must cast away all distinctions of 'ancient' and 'modern,' of 'dead' and 'living,' and must boldly grapple with the great fact of the unity of history. As man is the same in all ages, the history of man is one in all ages. The scientific student of language, the student of primitive culture, will refuse any limits to their pursuits which cut them off from any portion of the earth's surface, from any moment of man's history since he first walked upon it. In their eyes the languages and the customs of Greece and Rome have no special privilege above the languages and the customs of other nations. They do but take their place among their fellows, as illustrations of the universal laws which bear rule over human

nature and human speech. But let us come to history more strictly so called, to the history of man as a political being, to the history of our own quarter of the globe and our own family of nations. The history of the Aryan nations of Europe, their languages, their institutions, their dealings with one another, all form one long series of cause and effect, no part of which can be rightly understood if it be dealt with as something wholly cut off from, and alien to, any other part. There is really nothing in certain arbitrarily chosen centuries of the history of Greece and Italy, which ought to cut them off, either for reverence or for contempt, from any other portion of the history of the kindred nations. There is nothing to make the so-called 'ancient' history a separate study from that of so-called 'modern' times. 'Ancient' history calls for no special powers for its mastery; it calls for no special method in its study. The powers which are needed for the mastery of ancient history are the same as

those that are needed for the mastery of modern history. The method, the line of thought, the habits of research and criticism, which are needed for the one are equally needed for the other. Knowledge is, in both cases, gained by the exercise of the same faculties, and by the use of the same process in their exercise. So too it is with language. There is not, as the world in general seems to think, anything special or mysterious about the Greek and Latin tongues, or about those particular stages of their history which are picked out to receive the name of classical. The accurate knowledge of one language can be gained only by the same means as the accurate knowledge of another. It does not need two sets of faculties, but one and the same set, to enable us to master the inflexions of the tongue of Homer and the kindred inflexions of the kindred tongue of Ulfilas.

No language, no period of history, can be understood in its fulness, none can be clothed

with its highest interest and its highest profit, if it be looked at wholly in itself without reference to its bearing on those other languages, those other periods of history, which join with it to make up the great whole of human, or at least of Aryan and European, being. The tie which binds together the Greek and the Latin languages is perhaps closer than that which binds either of them to any other member of the great family. But the tie is simply closer in degree; it is in no way different in kind. We are at last learning that our scientific knowledge of the speech of Greece is imperfect unless we add to it a scientific knowledge of the speech of England, and that our knowledge of the speech of England is imperfect unless we add to it a scientific knowledge of the speech of Greece. We are learning that Greek and Roman history do not stand alone, bound together by some special tie, but isolated from the rest of the history of the world, even from the history of the kindred nations. We are learn-

ing that European history, from its first glimmerings to our own day, is one unbroken drama, no part of which can be rightly understood without reference to the other parts which come before and after it. We are learning that of this great drama Rome is the centre, the point to which all roads lead, and from which all roads lead no less. It is the vast lake in which all the streams of earlier history lose themselves, and from which all the streams of later history flow forth again. The world of independent Greece stands on one side of it; the world of modern Europe stands on another. But the history alike of the great centre itself and of its satellites on either side can never be fully grasped except from a point of view wide enough to take in the whole group, and to mark the relations of each of its members to the centre and to one another. As with the language, so with the history. Our knowledge of the history of Greece is imperfect without a knowledge of the kindred

history of England, and our knowledge of the history of England is imperfect without a knowledge of the kindred history of Greece. Rome is the centre; Rome is the common link which binds all together; and yet, while learning this, while learning more truly and fully the place and dignity of Rome, we are learning too to cast away the superstition which once looked on her language as the one guide and key to all other languages and to all human knowledge. We have learned that all members of the great family are alike kinsfolk, entitled to stand side by side on equal terms. We have learned that Angul and his brother Dan may march boldly and claim of right to speak face to face with their cousin Hellên, and have no need to be smuggled in by some back-way through the favour of their other cousin Latinus.

I here stop to answer one possible objection. Is it, I may be asked, needful for the student of history or of language to be master of all

history and of all language? Must he be equally familiar with the tongue, the literature, the political constitutions, the civil and military events, of all times and places? Such an amount of knowledge, it may well be argued, can never fall to the lot of man. And some may go on to infer that any doctrine which may even seem to lead to such a result must be in itself chimerical. Now to be equally familiar with all history and all language is of course utterly beyond human power. But it is none the less true that the student of history or of language—and he who is a student of either must be in no small degree a student of the other—must take in all history and all language within his range. The degrees of his knowledge of various languages, of various branches of history, will vary infinitely. Of some branches he must know everything, but of every branch he must know something. Each student will have his own special range, the times and places which he chooses for his special

and minute study. Of these he will know everything; he will master every detail of their history in the minutest way from the original authorities. The choice of such times and places for special study will of course depend upon each man's taste and opportunities; one may prefer an earlier, another a later time; one may choose the East, another the West; one may choose a heathen, another a Christian period; but all are fellow-workers, if only they all remember that beyond the something of which they must needs know everything lies the everything of which they need only know something. No man can study the history of all ages and countries in original authorities. To the man who is most deeply versed in historic lore there must still be many periods of which his knowledge is vague, imperfect, and gained at second-hand. When a subject is so vast, it cannot be otherwise. Some branches must in every case be primary and some secondary; which are primary and which

are secondary will of course differ in the case of each particular student. It is enough if each man, while thoroughly mastering the branches of his own choice, knows at least enough of the other branches to have a clear and abiding conception of their relation to his own special branches and to one another. And the thorough knowledge of one period, the habit of minute research and criticism among contemporary authorities, undoubtedly gives a man a power which leads him better to see his way through the periods which he has to take at second-hand, and to feel by a kind of instinct which second-hand writers may be freely followed and which must be used with caution. A man who is thoroughly master of the period which to him is primary will readily grasp the leading outlines and the true relations of the period which to him is secondary. The one point is that of no period of history worthy of the name, of no part of the record of man's political being, can he afford to know nothing.

I have said that a knowledge of the history of Greece is imperfect without a knowledge of the history of England, and that a knowledge of the history of England is imperfect without a knowledge of the history of Greece. But I do not say that the knowledge need be in each case the same in amount, or even the same in kind. With many men one must be primary and the other secondary; one will be a study to be mastered in its minutest detail, while the other will be something of which it is enough to know the main outlines and to grasp the true relations of each period to the others. And as it is with history, so it is with language. The philologer will have certain languages of which he is thoroughly master, with whose literature he is familiar, and in which his tact can distinguish the nicest peculiarities of dialects and periods and particular writers. Of other tongues he will have no such minute knowledge; he may be unable to compose a sentence in them, perhaps even to construe a

sentence in them; yet he may have a very real and practical knowledge of them for his own purpose. That purpose is gained if he thoroughly grasps their relations to other languages, the main peculiarities which distinguish them, and the position which they hold in the general history of human speech.

Looking then at the history of man, at all events at the history of Aryan man in Europe, as one unbroken whole, no part of which can be safely looked at without reference to other parts, we shall soon see that those branches of history which are too often set aside as something distinct and isolated from all others do not lose but gain in dignity and importance, by being set free from the unnatural bondage, by being brought into their natural relation to other branches of the one great study of which they form a part. Let us look at the history of the Greek people and the Greek tongue. Some men speak as if that history came to an end on the field of Chai-

rôneia, while others will graciously allow that the life of Greece lingered on to be burned up for ever among the flames of Corinth. Some speak as if the whole being of the Greek tongue was shut up within those few centuries which, by an arbitrary distinction, we choose to speak of as 'classical.' Some indeed draw the line very rigidly indeed. There was one Greek historian before whose eyes the history of the world was laid open as it never was to any other man before or after. There was one man who, in the compass of a single life, had been as it were a dweller in two worlds, in two wholly different stages of man's being. To the experience of Polybios the old life of independent Greece, the border warfare and the internal politics of her commonwealths, had been the familiar scenes of his earlier days. His childhood had been brought up among the traditions of the Achaian League, among men who were fellow-workers with Markos and Aratos. His birth would almost

fall in days when Megalopolis stood under the rule of Lydiadas an independent unit in the independent world of Hellas. The son of Lykortas, the pupil of Philopoimên, may have sat as a child on the knees of the deliverer of Sikyôn and Corinth. He could remember the times when the tale of the self-devotion of their illustrious tyrant must have still sounded like a trumpet in the ears of the men of the Great City. He had himself borne to the grave the urn of the last hero of his native land, cut off, as Anaxandros or Archidamos might have been, in border warfare with the rebels of Messênê. He could remember times when Macedonia, perhaps even when Carthage, was still an independent and mighty power, able to grapple on equal terms with the advancing, but as yet not overwhelming, power of Rome. He lived to see all swept away. He lived to see Africa, Macedonia, and Greece itself, either incorporated with the Roman dominion or mocked with a shadow of freedom which left

them abject dependents on the will of the conquering people. He saw the dominion of the descendants of Seleukos, the truest heirs of Alexander's conquests, shrink up from the vast empire of Western Asia into the local sovereignty of a Syrian kingdom. He saw Pergamos rise to its momentary greatness and Egypt begin the first steps of its downward course. He saw the gem of Asiatic history, the wise Confederation of Lykia, rise into being after the model of the state in which his own youth had been spent. He lived to stand by the younger Scipio beside the flames of Carthage, and, if he saw not the ruin of Corinth with his own eyes, he tried to legislate for the helpless Roman dependency into which the free Hellenic League of his youth had changed. The man who saw all this saw changes greater than the men who lived in the days of Theodoric and Justinian, or the men who lived in the days of the elder Buonaparte. And yet there are scholars, men devoted to 'ancient' and 'classi-

cal' learning, who have been known to cast away from them the writings of the man who saw all this, because forsooth they were 'bad Greek,' because they did not conform in every jot and tittle to the standard of some arbitrarily chosen point in the history of a language which has lived a life of wellnigh three thousand years. As if the form were more precious than the substance; as if the changes in a language were not the most instructive part of the history of that language; as if it were not as unreasonable to call the Greek of Polybios 'bad Greek' because it is not the Greek of Thucydides, as it would be to call the Greek of Thucydides 'bad Greek' because it is not the Greek of Homer. But let us rise above trammels such as these; let us take a wider and a worthier view of the long history of the most illustrious form of human speech. Let us remember that the despised Greek of Polybios gives us an instance of a law which has gone on from his day to ours. Thucydides,

Xenophôn, Dêmosthenês, wrote and harangued in the dialect which came most naturally to their lips, in the dialect of their daily life. The History of Polybios is as little written in the dialect which came most naturally to his lips as is the History of Trikoupês. The language of an Arkadian inscription is something wholly different from the language of the contemporary History. That is to say, the dialect of Athens had already made that complete conquest of Hellenic prose literature which it has kept ever since. The classical purist may smile when I apply the name of Attic to the long succession of writers of Macedonian, Roman, and Byzantine date. But so it is; the style and spirit may change; the vocabulary may be corrupted by strange and barbarous intruders, but the mere form of words still remains Attic. The latest Byzantine writer really differs less from Xenophôn than Xenophôn differs from Herodotus. Even the language of a modern Greek newspaper, in its vain attempts to call back

a form of speech which has passed away, is Attic to the best of its ability. Its aim is to reproduce the Greek of Plato and Xenophôn, not the Greek of Herodotus or of Pindar. What higher tribute can be paid to the great writers of the short sunshine of Athenian glory, than that the dialect of their one city should for two thousand years have thus set the standard of Greek prose writing, that it should thus keep up one ideal of Hellenic purity among the many and shifting forms of speech which were the native dialects of the men who used it? But the full extent, the full worth, of such a tribute can never be fully understood by those who cast away with contempt whatever does not fully come up to an ideal whose fulness of course was unattainable except in its native time and place. The man who would fully take in the influence of the Greek tongue and the Greek mind on the history of the world must look far beyond the narrow range of time and place within which classical purism would confine

him. Let him see how, in the earliest days of Greek colonization, the tongue and the arts of Greece found themselves a home on every coast from the isle of Cyprus to the peninsula of Spain. Let him look on the greater isle of Sicily, twice the battle-field between the East and the West, between Africa and Europe, between the Semitic and the Aryan man. Let him see the native tribes gradually absorbed by kindred conquerors and neighbours, till the distinction between Sikel and Sikeliot died away, till the whole island was gathered into the Hellenic fold, a land whose Hellenic life lived on through the rule of Carthaginian, Roman, Saracen, and Norman, and where the tongue in which the victories of Hierôn had been sung to the lyre of Pindar lived on to record the glories of the house of Hauteville on the walls of the Saracenic churches of Palermo. Look again at the Phokaian settlement in Gaul; see how, among a race far more alien than the kindred Sikel, the arts and letters of Greece

held their place for ages, and how some glimmerings from the Massalian hearth seem even to have reached, not indeed to our own forefathers, but to our predecessors in our own island. See the long history of the Massalian commonwealth itself; how the spirit of the men who sailed away from the Persian yoke lived on in their kinsfolk who withstood the might of Cæsar, and sprang again to life in later times to withstand the sterner might of Charles of Anjou. From the western extremity of Greek colonization let us look to the eastern; let us turn our eyes from the northern shore of the Mediterranean to the northern shore of the Inhospitable Sea. The Greek kingdom of Bosporos and the Greek commonwealth of Cherson have passed so utterly out of memory that we may doubt whether, when, eighteen years back, those lands were in every mouth, there was one among the warriors and tourists and writers of a day who knew that, in compassing the fortress of Sebastopol, he was treading on the ruins of the

last of the Greek republics. Yet it is something to remember that, ages after Athens, and Sparta and Thebes had been swallowed up in the dominion of Rome, ages after their citizens had exchanged the name of Hellênes for the name of Romans, the fire once lighted at the prytaneion of Megara still burned on, and one single commonwealth still lived, Greek in blood and speech and feeling, the ally but not the subject of the lords of the Old and the New Rome. Thus far we have seen the free Greek settle on distant shores, and carry with him the freedom of his own land. But we must look also to other times and lands, when the Greek tongue and Greek arts were scattered through the world, but without carrying Greek freedom with them. Yet it was something that, before Greece yielded to her Macedonian master, he had himself to become a Greek, to be adopted into the great religious brotherhood of Greece, and to be chosen, with at least the outward assent of her commonwealths, to be their common leader

against the barbarian. The arms which overthrew her old political freedom carried her tongue and her culture through the kingdoms of the East. The centres of Grecian intellectual life moved from the banks of the Ilissos and the Eurôtas to the banks of the Orontês and the Nile. Even the barbarous Gaul, the descendant of the invaders of her Delphic temple, was brought in his new home within her magic range, and his Asiatic land deserved to be spoken of as the Gaulish Greece. Thus that artificial Greek nation arose, sometimes Greek in birth, always Greek in speech and culture, which so long divided the dominion of the world, and which, after ages of bondage, has again sprung to life in our own day. It is something too to see how truly Greece led captive, not only her Macedonian but her Roman conqueror; to remember how the first Roman historians recorded Roman legends in the Greek tongue, and how wellnigh every Roman poet went to Greece as the fount of his inspiration. But our

view will not stop with the Augustan or with the Flavian age. If we would see how truly Greece conquered Rome, we must see the two imperial saints of heathendom, Marcus in his camp by the Danube and Julian in his camp by the Rhine, choosing the tongue of Greece, and not of Rome, to receive the witness of the time when the prayer of the wise man was answered, and when philosophers held the dominion of the world. But from them we must turn away to the records of the Faith which the one persecuted and the other cast aside. Those conquests which made the Greek tongue the literary tongue of civilized Asia caused that it should be in the Greek tongue that the oracles of Christianity should be given to the world, and that Greek should be the speech of the earliest and most eloquent expounders of the Faith. The traditions of Greece and Rome, the conquests of Macedonian warriors and of Christian apostles, all joined together when the throne and the name of Rome were

transferred to a Greek-speaking city of the Eastern world, and when the once heathen colony of Megara was baptized into the Christian capital of Constantine. Thence went on the long dominion of the laws of Rome, but of the speech, the learning, and the arts of Greece, the dominion of the city which those who scorned and overthrew her political power none the less revered as their intellectual mistress. We have not gone through the history of Greece till we have read the legends carved in her tongue on the monumental stones of Ravenna, and blazing in all the glory of the apses of Venice and Torcello. We have not taken in how thoroughly Greece leavened the world, till we read how the panegyric of the Norman Conqueror tells us that the spoils of England were of such richness that they would not have disgraced the Imperial city, and that even Greek eyes might have looked on them with admiration. The Empire of Greece has passed away, but her changeless Church remains, the Church which

still speaks with the tongue of Paul and of Chrysostom, the Church which still sends up her prayers in the words of the liturgies of the earliest days, the Church which still keeps her Creed free from the interpolations of later times, and which, alone among Christian Churches, can give to her people the New Testament itself, and not man's interpretation of it. And now again the Hellên, disguised for ages under the Roman name, has once more stood forth as a nation, a nation artificial indeed as regards actual blood, but a nation well defined by its Greek speech and its Greek religion. And, if regenerate Hellas has in some points failed, what has been the cause of her failure? Mainly because regenerate Hellas has, in the zeal of her new birth, forgotten her long continuous being. It is, above all things, the dream of the irrecoverable past, the dream of the exclusively classic past, which has checked the progress of the ransomed nation. A Greece which could utterly forget Athens and Sparta, which could look on herself simply as one

of the Christian races rescued, or to be rescued, from the bondage of the Infidel—a Greece which could look on herself, and which was allowed to look on herself, simply as the yoke-fellow of Servia and Bulgaria—would be far more likely to hold up her head among the nations of Europe than a Greece that still dreams of Thermopylai and Marathôn, albeit her strife for freedom was one in which the very soil of Thermopylai and Marathôn was again dyed with the blood of vanquished barbarians.

Surely in such a view as this we learn how truly history is one; surely such a survey teaches us how the whole drama hangs together, how ill we can afford to look at any one of its scenes as a mere isolated fragment, without referring to the scenes before and after it. And surely we pay the highest homage to 'ancient' days, to 'classic' days, to the nation which stood forth as the first teacher of the human mind, and to the tongue which was the instrument of its teaching, not by shutting them up

within the prison of a few centuries, but by tracing out their influence on the history of all time, by showing how close is the bearing of those 'ancient' times upon the modern world around us, and how the language which we falsely speak of as 'dead' has in truth never died, but still lives on, as it has ever lived through the revolutions of so many ages. But we shall feel the oneness of history even more, if we turn from Greece and her influence on mankind to the influence of other 'ancient' and 'classical' people, to the long and abiding life of that other tongue which is even more strangely spoken of as 'dead.' Let us look at Rome, not the mere 'classic' Rome of a generation or two of imitative poets, but the true Eternal City, the Rome of universal history. And in this view, it is again no small witness to the oneness of true history that much that we have already looked at as Greek we must look at from another point as Roman. The influence of Greece on the later world, deep and lasting

as it has been, has been largely an indirect influence, an influence of example and analogy. No modern nation is governed by the laws of Lykourgos or the laws of Solôn; no modern state can directly trace its political being either to Athenian democracy or to Macedonian royalty. But Rome still lives in the inmost life of every modern European state. Two abiding signs of her rule stand out on the very surface of the modern world, and need no thought, no searching into records, to point them out or to explain their cause. Three of the foremost nations of Europe still speak the tongue of Rome, in forms indeed which have parted off into independent languages, but which are none the less living witnesses of her abiding rule, as not only the conqueror but the civilizer of the Western lands. And among all the nations which speak her tongue, and among many to whom her tongue is strange, the city of the Cæsars and the Pontiffs is still looked up to as their religious metropolis, though no longer

their temporal capital. Let us look at the history of Rome and of her language. We may say of Rome, in a truer sense even than of Greece, that her sound has gone out into all lands, and her words unto the ends of the world. In the view of universal history, the century or two of its 'classic' purity seem but as a moment in the long annals of the Imperial tongue. We might indeed be tempted to wipe out altogether the days of her 'classical'—that is, her imitative—literature, as a mere episode in the history of the undying speech of Rome. We might be tempted to say that the genuine literature of Italy went into a *katabothra* when the Camœnæ wept over the tomb of Nævius, and came out again when the dominion of the stranger Muses had passed away, and when the inspiration of Prudentius and Ambrose was drawn from sources at least not more foreign than the well of Helikôn. The old Saturnian echoes which sang how it was the evil fate of Rome which gave her the Metelli as her

Consuls, ring out again in those new Saturnian rimes which sing the praises of Imperial Frederick and set forth the reforming policy of Earl Simon. The truly distinctive character of the Latin tongue was not stamped on it by its poets, not even by its historians and orators. The special business of Rome, as one of those poets told her, was to rule the nations; not merely to conquer by her arms, but to govern by her abiding laws. Her truest and longest life is to be looked for, not in the triumphs of her Dictators, but in the edicts of her Prætors. The most truly original branch of Latin literature is to be found in what some might perhaps deny to be part of literature at all, in the immediate records of her rule, in the text-books of her great lawyers, in the Itineraries of her provinces, in the Notitia of her governments and offices. The true glory of the Latin tongue is to have become the eternal speech of law and dominion. It is the tongue of Rome's twofold sovereignty and of her twofold legisla-

tion, the tongue of the Church and the Empire, the tongue of the successors of Augustus and of the successors of Saint Peter. It has been, wherever king or priest could wrap himself in any shred of her Imperial or her Pontifical mantle, the chosen speech alike of temporal and of religious rule. In the hymn of the Fratres Arvales, in the 'lex horrendi carminis' of the earliest recorded Roman formula, we get the beginnings of that long series of witnesses of her twofold rule, as alike the temporal and the spiritual mistress of the Western world. In the eyes of universal history the true triumphs of the Latin tongue are to be found in lands far away from the seven hills, and even from the shores of the Italian peninsula. The tongue of Rome, the tongue of Gaius and Ulpian rather than the tongue of Virgil and Horace, has become the tongue of the Code and the Capitularies, the tongue of the false Decretals and of the true Acts of Councils, the tongue of Domesday

and the Great Charter, the tongue of the Missal and the Breviary, the tongue which was for ages in Western eyes the very tongue of Scripture itself, the tongue in which all Western nations were content to record their laws and annals, the tongue for which all those nations which came within her immediate dominion were content to cast away their native speech. It is this abiding and Imperial character of the speech of Rome, far more than even the greatest works of one or two short periods in its long life, which gives it a position in the history of the world which no other European tongue can share with it. But this its position in the history of the world can never be grasped except by those who look on the history of the world as one continuous whole. It is unintelligible to those who break up the unity of history by artificial barriers of 'ancient' and 'modern.' Much that in a shallow view of things passes for mere imitation, for mere artificial revival, was in truth

abiding and unbroken tradition. Of all the languages of the earth, Latin is the last to be spoken of as dead. It was but yesterday the universal speech of science and learning; it is still the religious speech of half Western Europe; it is still the key to European history and law; and, if it is nowhere spoken in its ancient form, it still lives in the new forms into which it grew in the provinces which Rome civilized as well as conquered. It was a wise saying that the true scholar should know, not only whence words come, but whither they go. The history of the Latin language is imperfect if it does not take in the history of the changes by which it grew into the tongue of Dante and Villani, into the tongues of the Provençal Troubadour and the Castilian Campeador, and into that later but once vigorous speech which gave us the rimes of Wace and the prose of Joinville, and which still lives in so many of the statutes and records and legal formulæ of our own land.

In truth, as the full meaning and greatness of the Roman history cannot be grasped without a full understanding of history as a whole, so the history of Rome is in itself the great example of the oneness of all history. The history of Rome is the history of the European world. It is in Rome that all the states of the earlier European world lose themselves; it is out of Rome that all the states of the later European world take their being. The true meaning of Roman history as a branch of universal history, or rather the absolute identity of Roman history with universal history, can only be fully understood by giving special attention to those ages of the history of Europe which are commonly most neglected. Men study what they call Greek and Roman history; they study again the history of the modern kingdoms of England and France. But they end their Roman studies at the latest with the deposition of Augustulus; sometimes they do not carry them beyond Pharsalia and Philippi. Their study of English

history they begin at the point when England for a moment ceased to be England; their French studies they begin at some point which teaches them that the greatest of Germans was a Frenchman. At all events, they begin both at some point which leaves an utter gap between their 'ancient' or 'classical' and their 'modern' studies. To understand history as a whole, to understand how truly all European history is Roman history, we must see things, not only as they seem when looked at from Rome and Athens, from Paris and London, but as they seem when looked at from Constantinople, from Aachen, and from Ravenna. In that last-named wondrous city we stand as it were on the isthmus which joins two worlds, and there, amid Roman, Gothic, and Byzantine monuments, we feel, more than on any other spot of the earth's surface, what the history of the Roman Empire really was. It is in those days of the decline of the Roman power, which were in truth the days of its greatest conquests,

that we see how truly great, how truly abiding, was the power of Rome. When we see how thoroughly the conquered Roman led captive his Teutonic conqueror, we see how firm was the work of Sulla and of Augustus, of Diocletian and of Constantine. We see it alike when Odoacer and Theodoric shrink from assuming the title and ensigns of Imperial power, and when the Imperial crown of Rome is placed upon the head of the Frankish Charles. We see it in our own day as long as the *cognomen* of a Roman family, strangely changed into the official designation of Roman sovereignty, still remains the highest and most coveted of earthly titles. To know what Rome was, to feel how she looked in the eyes of other nations, it is not enough to read the hireling strains in which Horace sends the living consul and tribune to drink nectar among the gods, or those in which Virgil and Lucan bid him take care on what quarter of the universe he seats himself. Let us rather see how Rome, in the days of her supposed decay, looked

in the eyes of the men who overthrew her. Let us listen to the Goth Athanaric, when, overwhelmed by the splendour of the new Rome, he bears witness that the Emperor is a god upon earth, and that he who dares to withstand him shall have his blood on his own head. Let us listen to Ataulf in the moment of his triumph, when he tells how he had once dreamed of sweeping away the Roman name, of putting the Goth in the place of the Roman, and Ataulf in the place of Augustus, but how he learned in later days that the world could not be governed save by the laws of Rome, and that the highest glory to which he now looked was to use the power of the Goth in defence of the Roman Commonwealth. And so her name and power lives on, witnessed to in the Imperial style of every prince, from Winchester to Trebizond, who deemed it his highest glory to deck himself in some shreds of her purple; witnessed to when her name passes on not only to her subjects, allies, and disciples, but to the destroyers of her

power and faith; when Timour, coming forth from his unknown Mongolian land, sends his defiance to the Ottoman Bajazet and addresses him by the title of the Cæsar of Rome. But it is not in mere names and titles that her dominion still lives. As long as the law of wellnigh every European nation but ourselves rests as its groundwork on the legislation of Servius and Justinian, as long as the successor of the Leos and the Innocents, shorn of all earthly power, is still looked to by millions as holding their seat by a more than earthly right, it cannot be said that the power of Rome is a thing of days which are gone by, or that the history of her twofold rule is the history of a dominion which has wholly passed away.

In tracing out the long history of the true middle ages, the ages when Roman and Teutonic elements stood as yet side by side, not yet mingled together into the whole which was to spring out of their union;—in treading the spots which have witnessed the deeds of Roman

Cæsars and Teutonic Kings—many are the scenes which we light upon which make us feel more strongly how truly all European history is one unbroken tale. There are moments when contending elements are brought together in a wondrous sort, when strangely mingled tongues and races and states of feeling meet as it were from distant lands and ages. I will choose but one out of many. Let us stand on the Akropolis of Athens on a day in the early part of the eleventh century of our æra. A change has come since the days of Periklês and even since the days of Alaric. The voice of the orator is silent in the Pnyx; the voice of the philosopher is silent in the Academy. Athênê Promachos no longer guards her city with her uplifted spear, nor do men deem that, if the Goth should again draw nigh, her living form would again scare him from her walls. But her temple is still there, as yet untouched by the cannon of Turk and Venetian, as yet unspoiled by the hand of the Scottish plunderer. It

stands as holy as ever in the minds of men; it is hallowed to a worship of which Iktinos and Kallikratês never heard; yet in some sort it keeps its ancient name and use: the House of the Virgin is the House of the Virgin still. The old altars, the old images, are swept away; but altars unstained by blood have risen in their stead, and the walls of the cella blaze, like Saint Sophia and Saint Vital, with the painted forms of Hebrew patriarchs, Christian martyrs, and Roman Cæsars. It is a day of triumph, not as when the walls were broken down to welcome a returning Olympic conqueror; not as when ransomed thousands pressed forth to hail the victors of Marathôn, or when their servile offspring crowded to pay their impious homage to the descending godship of Dêmêtrios. A conqueror comes to pay his worship within those ancient walls, an Emperor of the Romans comes to give thanks for the deliverance of his Empire in the Church of Saint Mary of Athens. Roman in title, Greek in speech—boasting of

his descent from the Macedonian Alexander and from the Parthian Arsakes, but sprung in truth, so men whispered, from the same Slavonic stock which had given the Empire Justinian and Belisarius—fresh from his victories over a people Turanian in blood, Slavonic in speech, and delighting to deck their kings with the names of Hebrew prophets—Basil the Second, the slayer of the Bulgarians, the restorer of the Byzantine power, paying his thank-offerings to God and the Panagia in the old heathen temple of democratic Athens, seems as if he had gathered all the ages and nations of the world around him, to teach by the most pointed of contrasts that the history of no age or nation can be safely fenced off from the history of its fellows. Other scenes of the same class might easily be brought together, but this one, perhaps the most striking of all, is enough. I know of no nobler subject for a picture or a poem.

We might carry out the same doctrine of

the unity of history into many and various applications. I have as yet been speaking of branches of the study where its oneness takes the form of direct connexion, of long chains of events bound together in the direct relation of cause and effect. There are other branches of history which proclaim the unity of the study in a hardly less striking way, in the form of mere analogy. Man is in truth ever the same; even when the direct succession of cause and effect does not come in, we see that in times and places most remote from one another like events follow upon like causes. European history forms one whole in the strictest sense, but between European and Asiatic history the connexion is only occasional and incidental. The fortunes of the Roman Empire had no effect on the internal revolutions of the Saracenic Caliphate, still less effect had they on the momentary dominion of the house of Jenghiz or on the Mogul Empire in India. Yet the way in which the

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European Empire and its several kingdoms broke in pieces has its exact parallel in those distant Eastern monarchies. After all real dominion in the West had passed away from the New Rome, Gothic and Frankish Kings bore themselves as lieutenants of the absent Emperor. It was by Imperial commission that Ataulf conquered Spain and that Theodoric conquered Italy, and Odoacer, Hlodwig, and Theodoric himself, bore the titles of Consul and Patrician, no less than Boetius and Belisarius. So in later times we see the Duke of the French at Paris owning a nominal homage to the King of the Franks at Laon, and at the same time attacking, despoiling, leading about as a prisoner, the King whom he did not dare deprive of his royal title. We see Princes of Aquitaine and Toulouse so far vassals of the King of Laon as to date their charters by the years of his reign, but not caring to speak a word for or against their master in his struggle with their rebellious fellow-vassal.

We see in times far nearer to our own a Roman Emperor and King of Germany addressed in terms of the lowliest homage, and served, as by his menial servants, by princes some of them mightier than himself, princes who never scrupled to draw the sword against a Lord of the World who, as such, held not a foot of the earth's surface. We see the parallels to this when the dominion of Jenghiz is split up into endless fragments which still remember the name of their lawful sovereign. It is brought in all its fulness before our eyes when the Emir Timour, scrupulously forbearing to take on him any higher title, thus far respects the hereditary right of the Grand Khan who follows him as a single soldier in his army. We see it when every Moslem prince who had grasped any fragment of the old Saracenic Empire dutifully seeks investiture from the Caliph of his own sect; when Bajazet the Thunderbolt stoops to receive his patent as Sultan from the trembling slave of the Egyp-

tian Mamelukes, and when Selim the Inflexible obtains from the last Abbasside a formal cession of the rank and style of Commander of the Faithful. We see it in events which have more nearly touched ourselves. We see it in the history of our own dealings with the land where we won province after province from princes owning a formal allegiance to the heir of Timour. We see it in the way in which we ourselves have dealt with the heir of Timour himself, first as a pampered pensioner, lord only within the walls of his own palace, and at last as a criminal and a prisoner, sent to a harder exile than that of Glycerius in his bishoprick or of the last Merwing in his cloister.

One word more. The fashion of the day, by a not unnatural reaction, seems to be turning against 'ancient' and 'classical' learning altogether. We are asked, What is the use of learning languages which are 'dead'? What is the use of studying the records of times which have for ever passed away? Men who call them-

selves statesmen and historians are not ashamed to run up and down the land, spreading abroad, wherever such assertions will win them a cheer, the daring falsehood that such studies, and no others, form the sole business of our ancient Universities. They ask, in their pitiful shallowness, What is the use of poring over the history of 'petty states'? What is the use of studying battles in which so few men were killed as on the field of Marathôn? In this place I need not stop for a moment to answer such transparent fallacies. Still even such falsehoods and fallacies as these are signs of the times which we cannot afford to neglect. The answer is in our own hands. As long as we treat the language and the history of Greece and Rome as if they were something special and mysterious, something to be set apart from all other studies, something to be approached and handled in some peculiar method of their own, we are playing into the hands of the enemy. As long as we have 'classical'

schools instead of general schools of language, as long as we have schools of 'modern' history instead of general schools of history, as long as we in any way recognize the distinctions implied in the words 'classical' and 'ancient,' we are pleading guilty to the charge which is brought against us. We are acknowledging that, not indeed our whole attention, but a chief share of it, is given to subjects which do stand apart from ourselves, cut off from all bearing on the intellect and life of modern days. The answer to such charges is to break down the barrier, to forget, if we can, the whole line of thought implied in the distinctions of 'ancient,' 'classical,' and 'modern,' to proclaim boldly that no languages are more truly living than those which are falsely called dead, that no portions of history are more truly 'modern' —that is, more full of practical lessons for our own political and social state—than the history of the times which in mere physical distance we look upon as 'ancient.' If men ask

whether French and German are not more useful languages than Latin and Greek, let us answer that, as a direct matter of parentage and birth, it is an imperfect knowledge of French which takes no heed to the steps by which it grew out of Latin, and that it is an imperfect knowledge of Latin which takes no heed to the steps by which it grew into French. Let us answer again, not as a matter of parentage and birth, but as a matter of analogy and kindred, that it is an imperfect knowledge of German which takes no heed to the kindred phænomena of Greek, and that it is an imperfect knowledge of Greek which takes no heed to the kindred phænomena of German. If they ask what is the use of studying the histories of petty states, let us answer that moral and intellectual greatness is not always measured by physical bigness, that the smallness of a state of itself heightens and quickens the power of its citizens, and makes the history of a small commonwealth a more instructive lesson in politics than the

history of a huge empire. If we are asked what is the use of studying the events and institutions of times so far removed from our own, let us answer that distance is not to be measured simply by lapse of time, and that those ages which gave birth to literature, and art, and political freedom are, sometimes only by analogy and indirect influence, sometimes by actual cause and effect, not distant, but very near to us indeed. Let us give to the history and literature of Greece and Rome in their chosen periods their due place in the history of mankind, but not more than their due place. Let us look on the 'ancients,' the men of Plutarch, the men of Homer, not as beings of another race, but as men of like passions with ourselves, as elder brethren of our common Aryan household. In this way we can make answer to gainsayers; in this way we can convince the unlearned and unbelieving that our studies are not vain gropings into what is dead and gone. Let us carry about with us the thought that the tongue which we

still speak is in truth one with the tongue of Homer; that the Ekklêsia of Athens, the Comitia of Rome, and the Parliament of England, are all offshoots from one common stock; that Kleisthenês, Licinius, and Simon of Montfort were fellow-workers in one common cause—let all this be to us a living thought as we read the records either of the earlier or of the later time—and we shall find that the studies of our youthful days will still keep an honoured place among the studies of later life, that the heroes of ancient legend, the worthies of ancient history, lose not, but rather gain, in true dignity by being made the objects of a reasonable homage instead of an exclusive superstition.

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